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Benchmarking

Alliance 2010 Benchmarking Report: Information & Findings

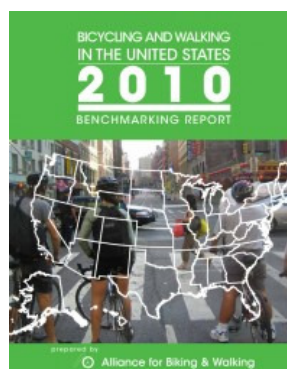
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About the 2010 Report:

Bicycling and Walking in the U.S.: 2010 Benchmarking Report is an essential resource and tool for government officials, advocates, and those working to promote bicycling and walking. The Benchmarking Project is an on-going effort to collect and analyze data on bicycling and walking in all 50 states and the 51 largest U.S. cities. This second biennial report reveals data including: bicycling and walking levels and demographics; bicycle and pedestrian safety; bicycle and pedestrian policies and provisions; funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects; bicycle and pedestrian staffing levels; written policies on bicycling and walking; bicycle infrastructure including bike lanes, paths, signed bike routes, and bicycle parking; bike-transit integration including presence of bike racks on buses, bike parking at transit stops; bicycling and walking education and encouragement activities; and public health indicators including levels of obesity, physical activity, diabetes, and high blood pressure. The report is full of data tables and graphs so you can see how your state or city stacks up. Inside you will find unprecedented statistics to help support your case for increasing safe bicycling and walking in your community. *Bicycling and Walking in the U.S.: 2010 Benchmarking Report* was funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and made possible through the additional support of Bikes Belong and Planet Bike.

Main Conclusions:

In these times of high gas prices, a warming climate, increasing traffic congestion, and expanding waistlines, increasing bicycling and walking are goals that are clearly in the public interest. As this report shows, where bicycling and walking levels are higher, obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes levels are

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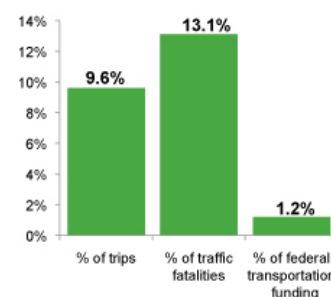
lower. Higher levels of bicycling and walking also coincide with increased bicycle and pedestrian safety and higher levels of physical activity. Increasing bicycling and walking can help solve many of the largest problems facing our nation. As this report indicates, many states and cities are making progress toward promoting safe access for bicyclists and pedestrians, but much more remains to be done.

This report has highlighted numerous measures to promote bicycling and walking. There is no silver bullet in regard to making communities more bicycle and pedestrian friendly, and a variety of measures are likely needed. But just as it took a large investment of public money into roads, signals, signs, and education for motorists, so too will it take an ongoing commitment of public investment in bicycling and walking to see major shifts toward these modes.

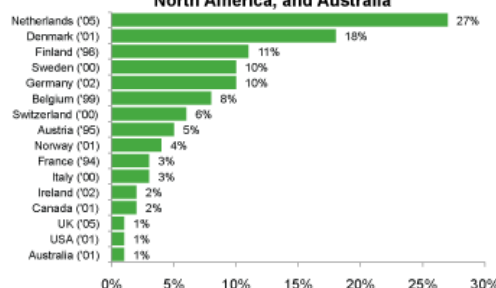
Looking Outside Our Borders

It is also crucial that the U.S. look to other countries to see what mode share levels are possible, and how other international cities have increased bicycling, walking, and safety. One such [comparison by Pucher and Buehler](#) (chart to right) found the U.S. to have the second lowest bicycle share of trips when compared to several European countries, Canada, and Australia. Countries like the Netherlands and Denmark with 27% and 18% of trips by bicycle, respectively, are setting the benchmark for what is possible.

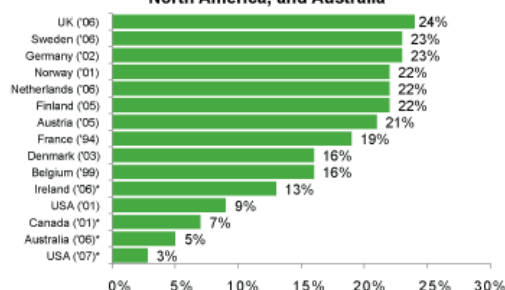
Levels of Bicycling and Walking, Bike/Ped Fatalities, and Bike/Ped Funding in the U.S.



Bicycle Share of Trips in Europe, North America, and Australia



Walk Share of Trips in Europe, North America, and Australia



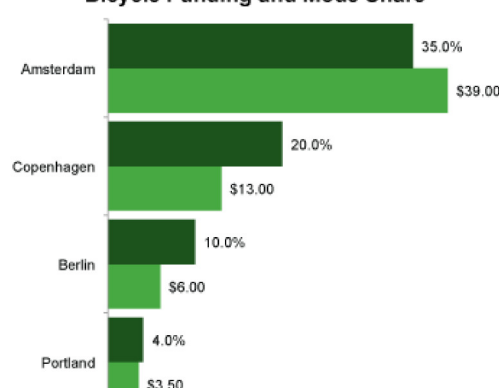
walk

share of trips. Likewise, a look at international cities ([Pucher and Buehler, 2008, chart to right](#)) shows U.S. cities far behind international peers. While benchmarking bicycling and walking in the U.S., it is important to keep an international perspective which reveals the great potential for improvement in this country.

Increasing Investment in Biking and Walking – What Data Show

Case studies show that the countries and cities that invest the most in bicycling and walking have higher bicycling and walking mode share, and are safer places to bicycle and walk. As this report shows, the U.S. overall has great disparities between bicycling and walking mode share, safety, and funding. Ten percent of trips are by bicycle or foot, yet bicyclists and pedestrians make up over 13% of traffic fatalities and receive just 1.2% of federal transportation dollars. An [international comparison of bicycle funding and mode](#)

Bicycle Funding and Mode Share



share by Gotschi and Mills and Rails to

Trails Conservancy (chart to right) found that international cities that invest greater amounts per capita into bicycling have greater levels of bicycling. These cities provide strong evidence that in order to increase bicycling and walking, the U.S. must invest more heavily in these modes.

A Multi-Pronged Approach to Promoting Active Transportation and Safety

While greater investment in bicycling and walking is the primary recommendation of this report, there are many other measures that must be taken to simultaneously strengthen public policy, infrastructure, and behavior toward bicycling and walking. Over one-third of the U.S. population is under age 16 (cannot legally drive) or over age 65. Streets designed just to move cars are leaving behind the most vulnerable road users, often making them prisoners in their homes or completely reliant on others to drive them around. Less than half of states and major U.S. cities have adopted complete streets policies that require that roadways be designed and built with all users in mind. In the absence of a national complete streets policy, the Alliance encourages states and jurisdictions to pursue local policies to begin to transform their local transportation culture and guarantee access for all road users.

Other policies featured in this report, such as education for police officers and the inclusion of bicycling and walking safety in driver education, are also key to shifting toward a bicycle and pedestrian friendly culture. Adult and youth education programs, public awareness campaigns such as "Share the Road," and other promotional efforts can also help raise awareness and change attitudes around bicycling and walking.

Many of the benchmarks featured in this report contribute to making communities more bicycle and pedestrian friendly by changing the built environment, culture, attitudes, and behaviors. But continuous evaluation of efforts to promote bicycling and walking is key to better understanding the relationships between levels of bicycling and walking, safety, policies, provisions, advocacy capacity, and other measures. Benchmarking is a necessary process to better understand these relationships, identify the most strategic areas on which to focus resources, and ultimately to increase these forms of active transportation.

Looking to the Leaders

In the meantime, this report provides plenty of examples of states and cities that are leaders in a variety of efforts to promote bicycling and walking. Appendix 5, page 171, contains a number of resources and models from cities and states in this report. These are presented so that states and cities can have models to look to for inspiration when working towards their goals.

The Benchmarking Report should be used as a tool by cities and states to learn what works best to promote bicycling and walking and what is possible here in the U.S. States and cities can learn from each other's successes and failures and set their goals accordingly. The Alliance encourages all state and city officials to take an active role in benchmarking their efforts to promote bicycling and walking. Even smaller cities that are not included in this report can collect data from their city and compare it to the progress in their own community. There is no doubt that government officials and advocates seeking to grow bicycling and walking have a lot of work ahead of them. But it is crucial for advocates and officials to take the time to evaluate their efforts. While many international benchmarking efforts require huge investments of government time and money to participate, the Alliance's Benchmarking Project is a free service that requires a relatively small amount of time to complete a survey every two years. With more officials and advocates taking the time to fully participate, this project will become a better source of information and a stronger benchmarking tool for everyone.

If you would like more information about this report, please contact the Alliance at

benchmarking@PeoplePoweredMovement.org .

note: The above text and illustrations are extracted and edited from Chapter 9: Conclusion of the 2010 Benchmarking Report

Project Supporters:

"Bicycling and Walking in the U.S." was funded by the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** and made possible through additional support from **Bikes Belong Coalition** and **Planet Bike**. Interested in supporting the Benchmarking Project and future reports? Contact Jeff Miller at **jeff@peoplepoweredmovement.org** .

The 2012 Benchmarking Report:

The next Benchmarking Report is scheduled for publication in January 2012. State and city surveys will be distributed and collected between October 2010 and January 2011. Interested in getting involved? Contact benchmarking@peoplepoweredmovement.org.

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